

Attachment 9

Vendor Questions Regarding DRAFT RFP OJP-2001-R-002, dated January 12, 2001:
Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Program Management Services

Vendor Questions and OJP Answers:

Q1. In the funding guidelines on page 4, the base funds for each site (\$100,000) do not include money for local coordinating councils (LCCs) or for any Addendum collection. If these costs are to be included in the base site cost, this does not represent an increase in site funds. As it exists in the original RFP for ADAM (1997) the site average was \$80,000/year and there was an additional \$3,500 for LCCs. The addenda were not covered and subsequently caused difficulties in keeping site expenses down. If the funding is included for these other items in the \$100,000 and in each subsequent year's added funds, this does not seem adequate to cover costs based on experience.

Staffing hours expand very little in the Option years. For example, it is the Site Directors' role to assist NIJ in identifying, evaluating and initiating new sites. That position's time commitment remains static throughout the project years.

A1. *We concur and will add \$3,500 per site for local coordinating council costs. The solicitation has been revised to reflect that no addenda are included in the basic requirement. Rather, all addenda, while within the scope of the contract, will be incorporated into the contract via a contract modification with appropriate funding provided. Offerors are not required to anticipate and budget for any addenda as part of their proposal. See page 2, note 2. Dollar amounts for certain other direct costs (CLIN 1014, Site Subcontractor Costs, etc.) are estimates (plug figures) that should not be changed by offerors. They allow the playing field to be equal since they don't require each offeror to incur the risk of estimating the costs themselves. Following award, the successful contractor is responsible for insuring that the plug figures included in the solicitation are current and accurate for the contract and inclusive of all known costs in order to avoid the possibility of funding shortfalls after award. We believe that the estimated hours are as accurate as possible, but Section B, note 4, allows offerors to change them if an adequate explanation narrative is provided.*

Q2. The narrative mentions (p.13) "affiliate sites" and "addendum instruments," but does not define these terms.

A.2. *Please see attachment 1 for affiliate site definition and attachment 2 for the definition of addendum. Please note that attachment 2 has been modified from the draft solicitation.*

Q3. There is currently only one annual report. The RFP mentions a "semi-annual report." Is this

is new direction for ADAM and what would this report cover?

A3. *Yes, it is a new direction; the exact content is still to be determined.*

Q4. Is the offeror to prepare four 4-yr budgets: base (sites =35); base with CAPI; expanded (sites =50-75); expanded with CAPI.

A.4 *Each offeror is to prepare its price proposal as described in Section B. This includes a base year and three one-year option periods. Within each year is included one “base year - anticipated requirements (minimum) of the current 35 ADAM sites,” and an “option A, estimated additional services.” The total of the anticipated requirements and the estimated additional services will be added together to equal the total not-to-exceed value of each year. The anticipated requirements (35 ADAM sites) remain the same in each contract year. The estimated additional services in each year increase from 15 additional ADAM sites, outreach data collection at the current 35 sites, and investigation of implementation of CAPI costs in the base year to up to 40 additional ADAM sites, outreach data collection at 75 sites, plus implementation and technical assistance costs for a CAPI system in year 4 (option year 3). It is assumed that CAPI will be investigated/studied in the base year, actually implemented in option year 1, and then be continued and maintained in option years 2 and 3. The stated additional costs should be broken out separately and priced in sufficient detail for the government to be able to identify the individual costs and order, or not order, the additional services as our needs and funding availability allow.*

Q5. The number of reports, monographs etc. (p.17) is unspecified. As these can be quite costly, it is important to specify the number, type and length of these reports.

A5. *The requirement includes a 4-page quarterly report for each site, 1 special topical report and 1 semi-annual report of 50 pages each, and 1 annual report of 100-150 pages. The quarterly report and annual report are available on the ADAM website, “www.adam-nij.net.”*

Q6. Listing of key personnel is quite long. Is it necessary that field operations and data center manager be identified as key personnel?

A6. *No, we will delete these positions as “key personnel,” but retain the job descriptions as mandatory minimums. Therefore, resumes are not required as part of the proposal. However, NIJ retains the right to approve or disapprove the resume submitted by the successful offeror for these positions prior to the employee commencing work under the contract. Section C has been revised accordingly.*

Q7. The duties of the Project Director at present include technical requirements. While the qualifications reflect this role, the description of those duties does not. It is our understanding that the PD oversees all aspects of the project and is the primary point of contact for technical issues related to the project. Is this not the intent of this solicitation?

A7. *Yes. The description of CLIN 1001 has been revised to state that the Project Director is responsible for all aspects of the project.*

Q8. For data management positions, is there an allowed substitution of less education (HS instead of BA) for more experience in supervision and survey management?

A8. *For CLIN 1005, Data Center Manager, we will allow a high school diploma and ten years of directly related experience.*

Q9. In the current ADAM contract, the Project Manager does not oversee fiscal management of the site's nor subcontracting issues. This is the role of the Project Director and contracting specialist.

A9. *It is OJP's interpretation and requirement that the Project Director is ultimately and fully responsible for all aspects of the project, including fiscal management and subcontracting issues. However, as stated in note 4 of Section B, offerors are authorized to propose substitute or revised labor category descriptions so long as the stated skills are offered in their proposal.*

Q10. Is it possible to use consultant staff in roles such as the Website technicians or field representatives?

A10. *Yes, an offeror is free to structure its proposal workforce as it sees fit, provided that they adequately describe and defended in their proposal narrative. However, it remains the discretion of the OJP technical evaluation panel as to the merits of any such changes.*

Q11. Is it possible to offer alternative approaches to staffing (p.26) as the data processing needs change? For example, with CAPI or other electronic editing and cleaning procedures, some staff members may not be needed or others with different qualifications may be needed.

A11. *Yes, Section B, note 4, on page 2 states that offerors are authorized to substitute revised labor categories and/or estimated hours in their price proposal if accompanied by a supporting narrative. However, any such substitutions which lower or revise the minimum requirements stated in Section C will be evaluated for realism and best value based on the subjective judgement of the technical evaluation panel. Also, be aware that under a time-*

and-materials contract, the contractor may allocate resources as required so long as the total obligated amount of funding is not exceeded.

Q12. The number of conferences (p. 32) seems high (6). Is it possible to reduce the number of conferences at which contractor staff must participate each year?

A12. *The minimum number of conferences that contractor staff are required to attend is two, one ADAM conference and one NIJ conference. If attendance is required at additional conferences, OJP will provide additional funding for labor and travel, after negotiation.*

Q13. The number of on-site visits and days seems high, particularly when the program reaches 50-75 sites. It appears that a requirement of at least 4 days annually which include training and observation as specified would suffice, rather than the requirement of 2 visits totally no less than 5 days for each site each year.

A13. *No, NIJ believes that the requirements are reasonable.*

Q14. Reporting to the COTR on site visits seems more manageable as site visit reports delivered within a week of visits rather than both follow up calls and site visit reports. Staff is in the field constantly, making these calls burdensome for the COTR.

A14. *No, NIJ believes that the requirements are reasonable.*

Q15. On p. 37 the sentence reads “NIJ shall retain the right to oversee data collection in each site and, as deemed necessary, intervene.” Since the contractor and the site are in a separate contractual relationship with each other, it seems that formal steps need to be specified for NIJ “intervening” in these situations.

A15. *While NIJ does retain the right to inspect and oversee site data collection, it acknowledges that any and all changes must be coordinated with and implemented by the prime contractor and flow down to subcontractors (sites) via modifications to its subcontracts.*

Q16. On p. 38 the draft indicates that “... the contractor shall develop and implement a method for timely gathering of necessary data.” It is our understanding that the sites retain the responsibility of collecting the necessary data. For the contractor to hold that responsibility would be a costly addition to duties.

A16. *While the sites are responsible for collecting data in accordance with the subcontracts, it is the responsibility of the contractor to monitor compliance and report noncompliance in the quarterly site reports. The contractor should report to NIJ any excessive costs in*

monitoring these subcontracts, as well as recommend the replacement of sites not performing adequately .

Q17. In the discussion of notification of performance problem (p.28) it seems that these serious events need to be done in writing, with five days to respond following written notification.

A17. *Yes, we concur that the contractor must be allowed sufficient time to respond to formal notification of performance problems.*

Q18. On p.32 , the addition of “training videos” to those materials that may be included might be better deleted. These are expensive to produce.

A18. *Such videos would be appropriate only where their cost is compensated for, either by savings in training and travel costs, or in added value by better trained employees and survey personnel.*

Q19. On p.3 the draft mentions that the contractor will support ten addenda in circulation. Please define “support”.

A19. *We have deleted the requirement for unknown numbers of addenda and stated that the costs of any addenda will be negotiated in advance and funded accordingly. See question no. 1.*

Q20. In the discussion of outreach and site case production for this “5th quarter” data collection, a number of 250 cases is specified. Should not outreach targets be determined by individualized sampling plans, as with the main data collection?

A20. *250 is just a ballpark figure for budget purposes; the exact number will be determined by individual sampling plans.*

Q21. On p.38 the target groups are described (adults male and female; juvenile male and female). Since many sites are not collecting juveniles, should they be listed as expected groups for data collection for all sites?

A21. *Refer to Attachment 5 for the current sample size requirement for each site in the anticipated base year requirement. Sample size for any additional sites will be provided when required.*

Q22. On Page 20 [18??], Item #5 states "...it will be necessary for the Contractor to have or to

establish an office in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. This office must have the capability to perform all activities under this contract directly or indirectly through subcontractors in the area." It is not clear why it is in the government's interest to require the establishment of facilities in the DC area if an offeror can demonstrate that it can (1) meet the government's need for accessibility, and (2) provide sufficient supervision and oversight to manage the work required under the contract even if some (or most or all) of the work (e.g., data entry) is conducted outside of the DC area. If a contractor has an established office in Washington, DC, and can demonstrate that it will meet the project management requirements (e.g., holding bimonthly meetings, communicating with the COTR and NIJ officials) of the RFP while possibly conducting most of the work outside the Washington, DC area, would that satisfactorily meet this requirement?

A22. Yes, we have revised the solicitation to allow offices in any location so long as the relevant project staff (Project Director, Project Manager, and Technical Advisor, etc.) are available to travel to meet with NIJ staff in Washington monthly, and as required, given 72 hours notice. NIJ will reimburse these travel costs as other direct costs so long as they are reasonable and offset by lower direct labor costs overall than would result from a Washington office.

Q23. On Page 14 [13?], Paragraph 2, the solicitation states, "The Contractor will follow the current protocols of the ADAM program to manage the existing multi-site data collection network, data processing center and dissemination efforts." Although "center" usually implies a facility, we assume that in this case the reference is actually to the data processing work and not to a facility/staff. Is this correct?

A23. Yes, the contractor is free to propose to complete the work as it feels appropriate. There is no longer a requirement for a data processing center in the Washington, DC, area as in the current contract. See also answer 22.

Q24. I write to encourage you to relax the standard with respect to a Washington DC office. Requiring that the teams have a capability to execute all functions from a Washington office is not necessary and works against DOJ's interests. ... It is important that the contract be structured to ensure that DOJ has easy access to key staff – the director and the manager, for example. But, as a practical matter, it was rarely ... necessary ... to have access to line data entry and editing staff. ... requiring the contractor to budget for weekly meetings ... between the manager and director and DOJ staff would be sufficient. ... unless this constraint is relaxed you will limit the ability of capable and qualified firms to compete for this work.

A24. See answers 22 and 23.